



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

July 11, 2007

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa, President
and Members of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Madam President and Members of the Senate:

Re: Senate Bill No. 686 SD1 HD1 CD1

On July 10, 2007, Senate Bill No. 686 entitled "A Bill for an Act Relating to Educational Assistants" became law without my signature, pursuant to Section 16 of Article III of the State Constitution.

The bill requires the Department of Education to report to the 2008 Legislature on a career ladder program for educational assistants and the cost of repricing these positions.

Although the need to recruit and retain educational assistants is understandable, I question the need for this bill.

The Department of Education provided testimony which requested general fund appropriations of \$8 million in fiscal year 2007-2008 and \$13 million in fiscal year 2008-2009. The Department gave this amount as the cost of implementing a career ladder for education assistants. The Department also testified that 3,100 educational assistants would qualify for the career ladder program. It is not clear how this data, which was provided to the Legislature during session, is different than the data required by this bill. This bill appears to unnecessarily duplicate the analysis that has already been completed by the Department.

Although there is no appropriation contained in this bill, the possibility of future appropriations is evident and causes concern because this was not an item of priority in the Board of Education approved Department of Education budget request, and a significant amount of general funds were requested by the Department outside of their approved budget to implement a career ladder during testimony on this bill.

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For the foregoing reason, I allowed Senate Bill No. 686 to become law as Act 274,
effective July 10, 2007, without my signature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Lingle', written in a cursive style.

LINDA LINGLE